

Update on actions

Local Toilet Strategy

Further to (1) Place Scrutiny Committee 12th January 2023 & (2) on-going actions from original strategy

(1) Place Scrutiny Committee Members on 16th January received a summary of the points they wanted further information and actions on. This summary – sent to Committee Members 6th April 2023 – serves to update Members as to actions noted and answers questions raised on 12th January. Any supplementary comment provided in red.

Actions

- The MCC hyperlink to opening times in the report needs to be fixed.

Members also referred to some changes to the public toilets listed in the strategy. Amendments have now been made to the 2019 version, so the spreadsheet of all publicly available toilets in Monmouthshire, showing locations, opening hours and facilities provided at each is now up-to-date.

This spreadsheet will need to be translated into Welsh prior to being placed on MCC's website. It will also go to Welsh Government to be incorporated into Data Map Wales (national toilet map).

Spatial map updated, together with all opening hours and facilities provided –

[New map | DataMapWales \(gov.wales\)](#)

- To contact Welsh Government about the toilets on the A40, as they are a target for vandalism.

Carl Touhig, Communities & Place Directorate, has raised this issue (re the closed toilets owned by WG) with Welsh Government and South Wales Trunk Road Agency (SWTRA). Carl attends regular meetings with WG so will continue to ask what their plans are for this empty building, to prevent further deterioration and vandalism.

- To get clarification from Landlords Services as to why the estimated repair cost for Whitehorse Lane toilets was so high, at £93k.

£93K was the estimated repair cost in 2019. Landlord Services have updated their estimate which is (April '23) now £166K. The figure is indeed very high, but includes (external) renewing roof, doors, all rendering, pathways, pipework, signage, etc.; (internally) renewing floor, doors, all tiling/grouting, 5 x toilets and sinks, handwashing machines; redecoration of all internal and external woodwork, rendering, etc.

Decision needed on future of this facility, in consultation with Town Council, etc. – Landlord Services.

Members raised the following points:

- Toilets need to be Stoma-friendly, with good/better signage.
Although not an officially recognised 'disability' the best option for those with this condition would be to apply for a RADAR key, which allows access to all disabled toilet facilities in the county. Applications would be accepted. Persons with this condition require more space than provided in a 'typical' public toilet, so disabled facilities are the better alternative. The spreadsheet provided outlines where all our disabled facilities are located. In summary 15 of the 20 traditional toilet blocks have disabled facilities (requiring RADAR key access), and there are a further 10 MCC buildings, for example our Leisure Centres and Hubs that provide same without need for a key, (as these are all manned during opening hours). So 25 disabled facilities in total. **Where missing, mirrors, hooks and shelving provided in disabled toilets in 12 of the traditional blocks 23/24. A few blocks don't have a separate disabled toilet, so mirrors, hooks, etc. provided in both male and female facilities. To be fully 'stoma-friendly' need mirror, hooks, shelving, bins and signage. MCC to advise on bin provision; stickers from Colostomy UK have arrived. When criteria met, the nationally recognised 'stoma-friendly' stickers will be displayed.**
- Clarification is needed over baby-changing facilities in both men's and women's toilets. Spreadsheet includes details on where baby changing is available, **and spatial maps provide same.** There are 21 facilities where they are provided. However, currently whether they're in male/female or unisex toilets not always identified. This can be recorded during the next proactive inspections, (MCC used the standard WG spreadsheet where this wasn't originally identified). Environmental Health provide annual checks and assess overall standards.
- The Changing Places wording could be stronger, and clarity was sought as to how the Council is addressing the lack of disability provision across the county.
Wording in the strategy will be amended to emphasise this important aspect. The strategy will need to be translated prior to going to our website and WG. There are 6 Changing Places facilities in Monmouthshire – enhanced changing areas for more profoundly disabled people – 4 in our Leisure Centres, one in Bridges Community Centre, Monmouth and one in Chepstow Mencap. All currently have 'Other Facilities' status with the national 'Changing Places' scheme, and they will be placed on their website when next updated. **Monmouth LC now fully CP compliant, Chepstow LC completing works in March 2024. The other two LC's are not feasible currently, (eg. overall size slightly insufficient) but are of a good standard. The national CP website will include reference to our 2 x fully compliant CP facilities when full approval given. When approved and on national website, MonLife will provide a Press Release.**

Here is the facility in Abergavenny Leisure Centre –

Picture of 'Changing Places' changing room, Abergavenny Leisure Centre



- It would be helpful to know if men or women are completing the User Satisfaction Survey, and their ages. This wasn't captured in the 2019 survey, when the WG guidance at that time was followed, but could be measured when a future satisfaction survey is conducted.
- The idea of gender-neutral toilets should be explored and included in the Impact Assessment. The Integrated Impact Assessment **has been** amended to refer to this aspect. There are a number of unisex toilets available in our county, as per spreadsheet. These are in our MCC buildings such as Leisure Centres and Hubs, 14 in total. Noted MCC would consider unisex provision when any future changes are made to our traditional blocks and encourage other owners, notably our Town & Community Councils, to do the same.
- Areas in which there is a high number of visitors, but no toilets e.g. Skenfrith, need to be explored. The Skenfrith Inn were contacted as to whether they would agree for non-customers to use their facilities when open. Pre-floods in 2019, there was an outside block outside that was regularly used by ramblers, etc. During the refurbishments the toilets were brought inside. The premises don't encourage non-customers to use their toilets, as they're now accessed through their restaurant. They wouldn't decline a request, however, so long as it's a limited number. The Inn also advise there are toilets the public can use at the village hall and shop. MCC would encourage local solutions, such as this example, in our rural locations.

- Could a shared responsibility with Abergavenny Town Council for White Horse Lane toilets be explored, rather than closing them, as there are no other toilets nearby? The Town Council have confirmed they would not wish to take on responsibility for this toilet block. The owners of Cibi Walk, however, have indicated interest in potentially picking up refurbishment and management costs. **Nick Keyse, Landlord Services, has confirmed Cibi Walk do not want to take on responsibility for this block. Landlord Services to consider future status.**
- Members support the toilets at Severn Tunnel Junction and agreed that keeping toilets free of charge is vitally important. (1) Transport for Wales advised accordingly, as owners of site, (2) noted all our publicly available toilets will remain free to use.

Recommended that an update report be submitted to Place Scrutiny in early 2024, one year on from the January 2023 update report. WG will be advised of this update and thanks to Members of the Committee for their active interest.

David Jones
Head of Public Protection

April 2023 & updates March 2024

(2) Original actions & progress

ACTION	PROGRESS
1. Continue to work closely with Town & Community Councils on options for maintaining and improving public toilet provision in the county	A continuing action. Many T&CC's undertook their own improvements in last 4½ years – Environmental Health to revisit and review standards in both MCC and T&CC provided facilities – done in February 2020, August 2022 & September 2023 - see Table Two in strategy.
2. Work with partners on how to best utilise the £17,200 Welsh Government grant.	The one-off grant was vired to Landlord Services for 23/24 to spend on MCC facility improvements, in consultation with MonLife – for example, funding improvements in a Leisure Centre to upgrade to full 'Changing Places' standard.
3. Work with the private sector to seek to provide more publicly available toilets where most needed.	Environmental Health to encourage participation in private sector businesses during their routine inspections.

<p>4. Display the national 'toilet/toiled' national logo (see 10.1 in strategy) in all participating toilet facilities, including Leisure Centres, libraries, etc.</p> <p>5. Improve awareness and information available on publicly accessible toilets by updating information on the Data Cymru website and provide a link to our Monmouthshire CC website.</p> <p>6. Regularly review cleaning and maintenance standards, together with T&CC's who manage many of the public toilets in our towns and villages.</p> <p>7. Environmental Health Officers to inspect privately provided toilets as part of their inspection regime and respond to any complaints.</p> <p>8. Work closely with Gwent Police to find solutions to reduce anti-social behaviour associated with public toilets.</p> <p>9. Provide proactive advice to all event organisers in the county on the suitability of their toilet provision.</p> <p>10. Respond to any Welsh Government recommendations on public toilet provision, and seek out notable practice adopted in other counties.</p>	<p>National logo signs received from WG. Action delayed during pandemic when many of these facilities were closed, eg. leisure centres and libraries. To be distributed together with 'stoma-friendly' signage later in 2024</p> <p>Completed. Data Cymru Wales (toilet map) up-to-date March 2024 & now links to MCC website</p> <p>Agreed to grade each facility to gauge improvements (or otherwise) over time. Environmental Health will inspect MCC and T&CC provided facilities annually - done so far in 2020, 2022 and 2023.</p> <p>Environmental Health Officers will inspect all privately provided toilets, eg. in restaurants, supermarkets and public houses. Conducted as part of their routine hygiene inspections.</p> <p>Whitehorse Lane block in Abergavenny previously recommended for closure, in part due to anti-social behaviour (when facility open) reported by Gwent Police.</p> <p>Completed - actioned by Monmouthshire Event Safety Advisory Group</p> <p>Noted WG will be in receipt of all Welsh LA's Toilet Strategy progress reports. Head of Public Protection to liaise with WG to determine any notable practice and share within MCC if/when received.</p>
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March 2024